

PRESS RELEASE

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FIRST RETROSPECTIVE OF MONIQUE ROLLINS OPENS IN KIEV, UKRAINE

On view at the Taras Shevchenko National Museum April 11-24 2016

FLORENCE, ITALY (March 14, 2016) – Internationally-renowned artist Monique Rollins (American, born 1980) unveils her first-ever career retrospective *Monique Rollins: Urban Jungle* at the Taras Shevchenko National Museum in Kiev, Ukraine April 12 through April 24, 2016. The exhibition will survey 26 works made from 2004 and 2015, including large-scale and smaller brilliantly colorful oil and acrylic paintings, layered collages, and impressive large-scale charcoal drawings on paper from her *Urban Jungle* series and *Beijing Memory, Nostalgia Paintings* series. The exhibition showcases the progression of the artist's work over the past 15 years and surveys her journey and development through time, while also paying homage to her Ukrainian ancestors.



Rollins' *Urban Jungle* series is a decade long investigation reflecting the artist's movements between New York, Florence, and Beijing. The 17 works from this series featured in the exhibition portray gestural freedom with textures and vibrant colors, capturing moods and feelings through mixed media. The works consist of large-scale oil paintings, smaller collage paintings, mixed media and watercolor collages, and charcoal drawings. This rich commentary on ideas of frenetic urban pace and its vital beauty contrasts with the quiet reflection of organic scenes featuring dream-like landscapes.

The selection of nine acrylic paintings in the exhibition from the series *Beijing Memory, Nostalgia Paintings* was created in 2015 during her IU Artist Residence in Beijing, China where she was inspired by the vibrancy of Chinese urban life and created vivid acrylic and paper collage paintings. Also inspired by her time in China, on view are five smaller acrylic collage paintings that pioneer new artistic directions.



For Rollins, her Ukrainian heritage has always been a source of great pride. This presentation of her work will serve to honor the homeland of her great grandparents and their siblings who emigrated to the United States in the 18th century.

“It has always been my dream to go to Ukraine and reconnect with my family’s past,” explains Rollins. “I am thrilled to be able to showcase the last decade of my work in a place that brings together my present with the history of my ancestors. It has been a very emotional journey for my family.”

The exhibition is co-curated by Julia Shylenko, Chief Curator of the Taras Shevchenko National Museum and Margaret Winslow, Curator of Contemporary Art at the Delaware Art Museum. A scholarly panel presentation on April 12, 2016 will coincide with the exhibition.

ABOUT MONIQUE ROLLINS

Born to a Ukrainian American family in Wilmington, Delaware in 1980, Monique Rollins paints between Florence, Italy; the United States; and Beijing, China. Rollins received her bachelor of fine arts degree from Syracuse University in 2002 and completed dual master’s degrees in painting and art history—specializing in Venetian Renaissance art—at Pratt Institute in 2005 and 2006.

Rollins’ work incorporates a number of mediums, including oil and acrylic, pencil, watercolor, pen and ink, and collage to create a contemporary voice which documents her ideas and experience in her own unique international painting style. She is influenced by Abstract Expressionism and the language of brushstrokes and emotional expression. Her brilliant color palette is often inspired by Venetian Renaissance painters of the 16th century. She finds other inspiration in pigments, exotic products, and the innovation of the far east during that period, along with the beauty of nature and the chaos of urban life. The relationships and mark-making

between the layers in her paintings and collages become material representations of her thoughts and reflections of the world around her.

Rollins has participated in international exhibitions, including Beijing American Center in Beijing, China; Andre Zarre Gallery in New York City; Metroquadro Gallery in Rivoli, Italy; Emerge Art Fair in Washington, DC; CONTEXT Art Miami during Art Basel Miami; and Art Central Hong Kong. In May 2016, her work will be presented by Metroquardo Gallery in CONTEXT New York Fair. Rollins is currently represented by Metroquadro Gallery in Torino, Italy and W.Ming Art in Asia.

ABOUT THE TARAS SHEVCHENKO NATIONAL MUSEUM

Taras Shevchenko National Museum is located in Kiev, Ukraine on the boulevard Taras Shevchenko 12 (subway station Universitet). The museum is dedicated to artist Taras Shevchenko and administered by Ukraine's Ministry of Culture. Opened in 1949, it consists of the holdings of the former Central Shevchenko Museum and the Shevchenko collections at the Kharkiv Art Gallery and other museums. The museum received National status in 2001. (Source: <http://www.encyclopediaofukraine.com/display.asp?linkpath=pages%5CT%5CA%5CTarasShevchenkoNationalMuseum.htm>)

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